

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A remote negotiation apparatus which causes,  
before providing a service including sales of  
merchandise, a provider of the service and a receiver  
5 to do remote negotiation through a communication  
environment, comprising

a control unit which displays a window of a  
predetermined format corresponding to a commercial  
transaction document related to providing of the  
10 service on a first operation terminal used by the  
provider, requests the provider to execute an input  
operation on the window to input information contents  
necessary for preparing the commercial transaction  
document, and stores the information contents of the  
15 commercial transaction document prepared by the input  
operation in a storage device, and which displays, on a  
second operation terminal used by the receiver, a  
commercial transaction document having the same  
contents as those of the commercial transaction  
20 document prepared by the provider, on the basis of the  
information contents of the commercial transaction  
document in the storage device in accordance with a  
browsing request from the receiver.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further  
25 comprising a printing device which prints the  
commercial transaction document displayed on the second  
operation terminal.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control unit receives an instruction, by the receiver, for designating a third party who is permitted to browse the commercial transaction document having the same contents as those of the commercial transaction document that the receiver can browse, and provides, to the designated third party, information related to the commercial transaction document having the same contents as those of the commercial transaction document by the third party.

4. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said control unit receives selection, by the receiver, of a providing method in providing the information related to the commercial transaction document to the third party.

5. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said control unit provides the information related to the commercial transaction document to the third party and also provides information related to a catalog about the service specified by the commercial transaction document.

6. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control unit requests alternative selection between a temporary storage state and a final storage state as a storage state in storing the information contents of the commercial transaction document in storage means, and

when the selected storage state is the temporary storage state, a change of the contents of the commercial transaction document by the receiver is permitted, and the commercial transaction document is updated on the basis of the changed contents, and when the selected storage state is the final storage state, the change of the contents of the commercial transaction document by the receiver is inhibited.

7. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein even when the selected storage state is the temporary storage state, said control unit inhibits the change of the contents when a degree of the change of the contents of the commercial transaction document by the receiver exceeds a predetermined range.

8. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the selected storage state is the temporary storage state, and the change of the contents of the commercial transaction document by the receiver is done, the provider is notified that the change of the contents of the commercial transaction document is done by the receiver.

9. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the selected storage state is the temporary storage state, and an approval operation for the contents of the commercial transaction document in the temporary storage state is executed by the receiver, said control unit changes the storage state to the final storage

state.

10. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said control unit receives an instruction, by the receiver, for designating a third party who is permitted to  
5 browse the commercial transaction document having the same contents as those of the commercial transaction document that the receiver can browse,

provides, to the designated third party, information related to the commercial transaction  
10 document having the same contents as those of the commercial transaction document by the third party, and inhibits the change of the contents of the commercial transaction document by the designated third party even when the selected storage state is the  
15 temporary storage state.

11. The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the selected storage state is the temporary storage state, said control unit permits a change, by the provider, of a providing price of the service specified  
20 by the commercial transaction document.

12. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the commercial transaction document is at least one of an estimate, a contract, and a purchase order which decides an amount related to providing of the service.

25 13. A remote negotiation method of causing, before providing a service including sales of merchandise, a provider of the service and a receiver to do remote

negotiation through a communication environment, the remote negotiation method comprising steps of:

displaying a window of a predetermined format corresponding to a commercial transaction document related to providing of the service on a first operation terminal used by the provider;

requesting the provider to execute an input operation on the window to input information contents necessary for preparing the commercial transaction document;

storing the information contents of the commercial transaction document prepared by the input operation in a storage device;

receiving a commercial transaction document browsing request from the receiver; and

upon receiving the browsing request from the receiver, displaying, on a second operation terminal used by the receiver, a commercial transaction document having the same contents as those of the commercial transaction document prepared by the provider on the basis of the information contents of the commercial transaction document stored in the storage device.

14. A program causing a computer to execute a remote negotiation method of claim 13.